

MUFORG

BULLETIN

August 1967

C O M M E N T

The latest British UFO "flap" has so far proved rather disappointing. Most of the reports have been of the "lights in the sky" variety.

There has been quite a large volume of reports, but one feels that many of them have got into the newspapers because there are insufficient hard news stories available at present.

However, the lack of spectacular landing reports - so far - has served to awaken interest in the subject without arousing hysteria.

RECENT NORTH WEST UFO REPORTS

Runcorn, Cheshire

July 3rd 0200 BST -- and other dates

Our attention was drawn to events at Runcorn by a report in the July 6th issue of the Runcorn Weekly News, sent to us by Mr J.G.Hodgkinson. The report was as follows:-

"FLYING SAUCER STORY REVIVED Strange Noises and Unusual Lights

"Flying saucers are in the air again! Coincidentally with renewed interest in the subject in various parts of the country - an Unidentified Flying Object society in the south recently kept nightly vigils to witness possible landings and, in nearby St Helens, a security officer was reported to have witnessed strange phenomena - there is a report this week of an inexplicable sighting by a Runcorn family.

"Previous Flying Saucer claims by Runcorn people have been regarded with disbelief and often with amusement. Of course, the stories cannot be true! But, after Monday morning, at least one Runcorn family have had reason to give the subject some more thought.

"It was at 2 a.m. that 20-years-old Mr Michael Baker, an electrician's labourer, of 25 Pine Road, was awakened by a noise. "I was lying in bed listening to this noise, a whirring or burring sound," he said "and then I went to the window. I was there nearly 15 minutes trying to fathom it out, and was just returning to bed when I saw it; it just looked like it was on the roofs of the new houses."

"His young wife, 17 years-old Janice, who was awakened by her husband, also saw the object. "The noise seemed very close, almost as if from the gardens, and it was loud. As soon as the object- it was just like a glow- went, so did the noise. Michael heard the noise first and got up to the window. He saw a light like a moonbeam on the path. When I got up, the light vanished, then slowly came back like a big bowl of fire."

"Mrs Baker roused her mother, Mrs Betty Bennett, who went quickly to the window, as by this time the "sighting" was beginning to diminish in size.

"Mrs Bennett said it was definitely unnatural. It was too early for the sun to be coming up, she said.

"Everybody hears noises along here, it's a whining noise."

"The object she described as similar to a quarter moon with the top cut off, "As it moved away it changed shape to an oval. It left the sky pink, too. It looked as if it were glowing mad hot."

"Her thirteen-years-old daughter, Geraldine, a pupil at Grange Secondary School, was also brought to the window--but by now the light had lessened to a dot ... then to everyone's surprise it seemed to approach, growing in size. It did not regain its previous size and this time was unaccompanied by sound.

Mr Baker commented: "It could have been farther off towards Halton, but from where we were it seemed to be over the houses. When it came back there was no noise." By this time it was 2.30 they recalled, as Geraldine was sent to check the clock.

Objects have been witnessed in the area before. The family recalled several years ago when a neighbour Mr R.Newby of Boston Avenue saw something in the sky. The "Weekly News" at the time reported him as saying: "My wife and I were settling down to watch "Emergency Ward 10". The curtains were open and the lights in the sitting room were off. Then a vivid, bluish-coloured light appeared above the field between my house and Halton and barely seconds later a huge, star like thing went sailing across."

Mr Newby's sighting was in November 1963. The newspaper report continued: "This, which I believe to be a flying saucer, flew just above the roof tops all the time. My wife was very scared and my 15-years-old daughter Ann refused to sleep on her own. It shook them both up a heck of a lot.

"When Ann went to school the next day two of her friends also said they had seen the peculiar light.

"I served for seven years in the R.A.F. and I have heard pilots speak about these flying saucers after returning from operations. I myself was very alarmed. I've seen plenty of shooting stars and airliners but this was neither. It looked nothing like a shooting star and it was dead silent."

Of this latest UFO, Mr Baker concluded: "No one can explain these noises over the last three years. They could be different things." They may not be the only people who saw the light for Mr Baker said that at the time he could see a bedroom light on across in Grangeway, as though someone was at the window.

Mrs Bennett recalled how a friend of her daughter's had left their home very late one evening to walk to her own home in Weston. The girl, who is now in the forces, was passing the I.C.I. Heath offices when she saw something. She was so terrified she fled to a nearby house and knocked. The householder let her in but he himself admitted something was wrong, for the pet dog's hair was standing on end, the animal was obviously scared.

Lightheartedly Mrs Bennett compared the night's Happenings with "The Invaders" T.V. programme and cracked "If I'd met anyone with a crooked little finger this morning, I'd have run a mile."

On a more serious note she added: "The trouble is though,

people say "nowt." We've heard the noises for ages. I was with Janice one night when we heard the noise so close we thought it was a bird. We opened the upstairs box room window and put our heads out. We hoped the bird might have crashed into the window, but there was nothing."

She had even told her schoolgirl daughter not to say anything but Geraldine had told a few close friends and as was expected "no-one would believe her."

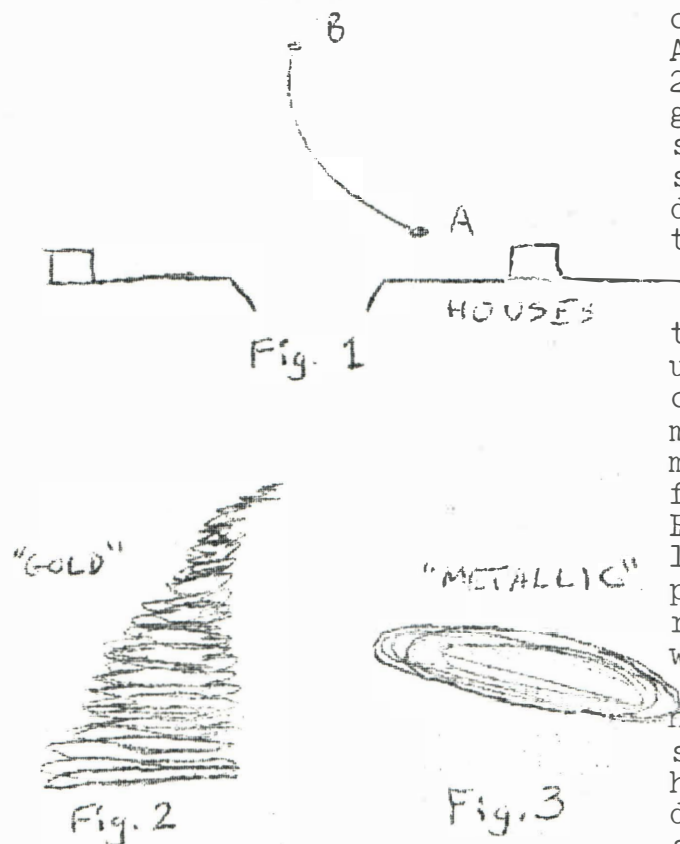
Just as the Bennett family would have laughed it off too ... until Monday morning that is."

The witnesses were visited the following week by John Harney and Alan W. Sharp and they confirmed that the newspaper report was substantially correct, except that the object looked like a quarter moon with the bottom cut off, not "with the top cut off" and that the noise was first heard by Janice, not by Michael.

The witnesses were unable to estimate the true distance of the object, but said it must have been further away than the houses over which it appeared - about 400 yards - as the roofs and chimneys were silhouetted against the light. The bearing of the object was about 090° and the elevation varied from "a few degrees" to about 10° higher. It was difficult to estimate the true elevation because of the upward slope of the ground behind the house.

Mrs Bennett said that when the object was hovering in the position A (Fig.1), it appeared as in Fig. 2. It was shining with a golden glow, similar to that of sodium street lights. It appeared to be spinning and its edges were ill-defined. Mrs Bennett compared it to a Chinese lantern. After hovering for a while in position A the object seemed to fold up, like an accordion, until it assumed the appearance of a sharply-defined, spinning, metallic disc (Fig.3). It then moved quickly upwards and away from the witnesses to position B, where it was reduced to a star-like point. It then retraced its path to position A, where it repeated the performance, but without the noise this time.

The family said that the noise which accompanied this sighting was the same noise they had been hearing at intervals during the past three years. These strange noises had also been heard



in the other houses in the terrace, and this was confirmed by a neighbour who called in while we were talking. The noise was said to be quite loud enough to be easily recorded on a tape recorder, if one were available.

Michael Baker told us he had had two other sightings. On July 7th, at about 2230, he was walking along a path across the fields behind his house when he saw a large, round object quickly crossing the sky. The following morning, while looking out of his bedroom window at about 0200, he saw a flashing, star-like object slowly crossing the sky. We pointed out that this could possibly have been a satellite, or a distant aircraft, but he said that it was "more convincing" than the sighting of July 3rd. He repeated this remark, but it is not clear what he meant by it.

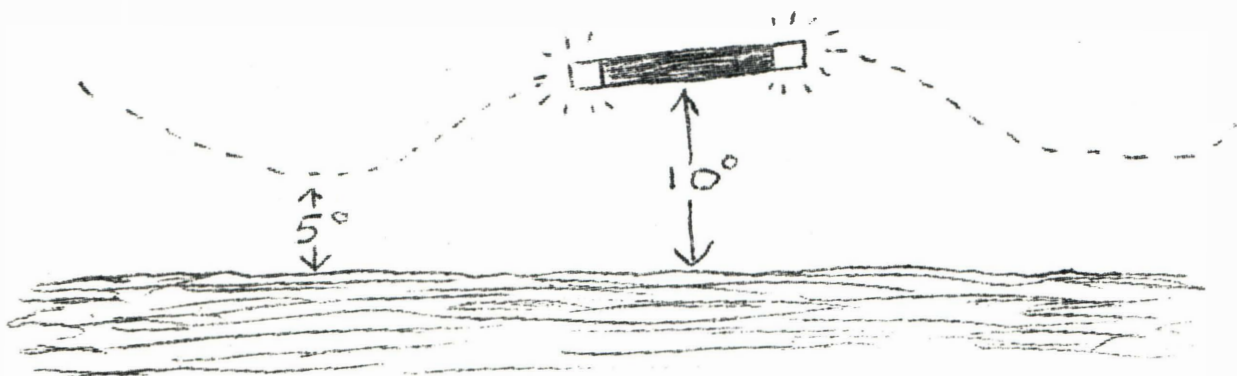
We ~~may~~ were told that there have been other local sightings, including a landing report, but no details were immediately available. Also, there is a local contactee, Mr James Cook, who, a few years ago, claimed to have been taken in a flying saucer to the

planet "Shebic." Mr Cook is fairly well-known locally; we were told that he holds regular faith healing sessions and seances in Runcorn.

Whiston, near St Helens, Lancashire July 9th, 0145-0148 BST

While skywatching in the early morning of July 9th, MUFORG member, Mr G.T.Woods observed a cylindrical object moving in a N.W. direction over Huyton. The ends of the cylinder were bright red and the object itself was the size of a sixpence held at arm's length.

The object was travelling in a series of dips, its altitude varying between 5° and 10° . Its speed was estimated to average about 400 m.p.h., increasing by about 50 m.p.h. on the ascent. See sketch below.



Dingle, Liverpool

July 11th 0130 BST ?

A large, round, greyish object, moving rapidly across the sky, startled witnesses. (We are still waiting for return of completed sighting form.)

Formby, Lancashire

July 18th 2200 BST

Mr J.G.Clore, of Moss Green, Formby, was out walking when he saw a large orange ball of light coming towards him from the direction of New Brighton. Suddenly it seemed to drop very quickly and vanish.

The brightness of the light made his eyes "very queer". This sensation lasted for about half an hour.
(Source: Liverpool Daily Post, 24/7/67)

Aintree, Liverpool

July 20th 2250 BST

Mr B.Young and his fiancée, of Aintree, were on Melling Bridge, Aintree, when they saw an orange-red object low down in the direction of Kirkby. Its shape was described as "not quite round." It hovered and then seemed to move downwards and away from them. It was in view for about 12 seconds.
(Source: Telephone call from witness)

Hindley, near Wigan, Lancashire

August 10th 0043 BST

Police Constables Lionel Haw and Steve Parsonage, stationed at Hindley, reported seeing an unidentified flying object at 0043 BST. Several newspapers carried full reports of the incident, including the Liverpool Echo, from which the following report is taken:

P.C.Parsonage said: "I was on the beat when I glanced up and saw this saucer-shaped object in the sky. There were no clouds and I could see it very clearly.

"It wasn't moving and was glowing white. I was amazed and couldn't believe my eyes. I looked up the road and saw P.C.Haw

driving a Panda car.

"I waved him to stop and he came across. We stood looking at it and suddenly it started to move."

P.C. Haw, a member of the force for eight years, added: "We watched it moving across the sky for two minutes. It certainly wasn't a comet, plane or weather balloon. I have seen all these and know what I am talking about."

"It was as big as an orange and very high. I would estimate its size at well over 100 feet in diameter. It was very bright and didn't flicker."

"I drove to Hindley police station and phoned Jodrell Bank to see if it was a satellite but they assured me it could not possibly be as there were none in the area."

"Then I checked with Manchester and Barton airports just to make sure and was told that no planes were in the vicinity."

Inspector Albert Jordan, in charge of the Hindley section said: "Both men are very reliable and policemen are trained observers. They wouldn't say they had seen it if it wasn't true."

Bredbury, near Stockport, Cheshire August 10th 0350 BST

Police Constables Peter Morris and Robert Young, stationed at Bredbury, near Stockport, were on duty together in Green Lane, Romily, Bredbury. PC Morris said there was a flash of light 200 yards away from them and about 200 yards up in the sky. They saw a large, cigar-shaped object which was whitish in colour. It was at least 100 feet long and possibly a lot more. It reeled away at a very fast speed and was out of sight in six or seven seconds.

Bredbury is about 30 miles away from Hindley.
(Sources: Daily Mail, 17/8/67; Liverpool Echo, 17/8/67, 19/8/67)

Platt Bridge, near Wigan, Lancashire August 15th 2200 BST

Mrs Margaret Dodd, wife of the licensee of the Railway Hotel, Platt Bridge, near Wigan, said she watched a round, orange-red object zig-zagging across the sky for two minutes at 10 p.m. on August 15th.

(Source: Daily Mail, 18/8/67)

Coppull, near Chorley, Lancashire August 15th evening?

Mill workers William Holme, 21, and Peter Gallery, 22, both of Mavis Drive, Coppull, near Chorley, said they were walking down Mavis Drive when they saw a yellow-orange ball travelling below the clouds from North to South over Chorley.

The time of the sighting is not given, but it presumably ties in with the sighting at Platt Bridge, as it appears in the same newspaper article.

(Source: Daily Mail, 18/8/67)

Horwich, near Bolton, Lancashire August 22nd 2130, 2135 & 2230 BST

Mr David Evans, of Rawson Street, Farnworth reported to the police that he saw flying saucers on the moors at Horwich. He saw the first at 2130, and the others at 2135 and 2230.

(Source: Daily Mail, 23/8/67)

Hindley, near Wigan, Lancashire August 19th 2140 & 2205
August 29th 2140 & 2210

Following up newspaper and television reports featuring UFO sightings by Bernard Cox, of Hindley, your Editor paid him a preliminary visit on September 2nd and conducted an informal interview with him to see if it called for any intensive investigation.

He said he and his family and neighbours had witnessed UFOs on the dates mentioned above. The main sightings were of a huge, top-shaped object which appeared at 2140 on two occasions (August 19th and August 29th). He gave me a list of names of 15 other witnesses. Also, a landing was recently reported from nearby Westhoughton. People from nearby Bickershaw also reported seeing UFOs.

He told me that during the past few weeks his family and neighbours had been disturbed three or four nights a week by strange humming or droning noises. These noises are said to cause headaches.

Further investigations are to be carried out and a full report will be published in due course.

R E C E N T B O O K S

Challenge to Science by Jacques & Janine Vallee. Neville Spearman, 25/-

Readers of this book will obtain a good idea of the methods being employed by interested scientists in their approach to the UFO problem. At the moment it seems that the physical scientists have the upper hand. Psychologists have, so far, remarkably little to say concerning the phenomenon and the author shows that those who have derived purely psychological explanations have evidently not done their homework very well.

This apparent imbalance has led to the favouring of the "interplanetary spaceships" hypothesis. This hypothesis appears to be implied throughout the book. Vallee is by no means alone in pursuing it; I understand that the Condon committee are using it as their working hypothesis.

Much emphasis is given to the statistical treatment of UFO reports. Many readers will be interested to note that Vallee's researches confirm the findings of some other workers that there appears to be a correlation between the incidence of UFO activity and the Martian cycle. However, the author cautions us not to jump to conclusions.

The last chapter is entitled "The Solution is Within Reach," but one feels that many researchers will take a more pessimistic view.

The Interrupted Journey by John G. Fuller. The Dial Press, New York. 5.95 dollars

"Some scientists have argued that if the phenomenon is purely psychological, then the story should be considered even more startling than if it were an indication of extraterrestrial visitors."

This quotation from Mr Fuller's book neatly demonstrates that the subject of UFOs is a very important one, whatever the true explanation may be.

The author deals with the case of Mr and Mrs Barney Hill, who believe that they were taken on board a flying saucer while on their way back home from a holiday in Canada.

They saw an unidentified flying object which appeared to be following their car. When they got home they eventually realised that there were two hours missing from their memories of the journey. This period of amnesia was investigated, under hypnosis, by the psychiatrist, Dr Benjamin Simon.

The story that the two witnesses revealed under hypnosis was that they had been abducted by the crew of an unidentified flying object and submitted to medical examination. In the introduction to the book Dr Simon writes: "... it must be understood that hypnosis is a pathway to the truth as it is felt and understood by the patient. The truth is what he believes to be the truth, and this may or may not be consonant with the ultimate nonpersonal truth. Most frequently it is."

What makes the book more impressive is the fact that the investigations were carried out by sensible and rational people. The story is interesting but, on the basis of the evidence obtained, no definite conclusions have been arrived at.

The casual reader will probably find it rather heavy going but it will no doubt prove very useful to any serious investigator who finds himself confronted with what appears to be a similar case.

The Warminster Mystery by Arthur Shuttlewood. Neville Spearman, 25/-

Mr Shuttlewood employs what is an all-too-common technique in UFO literature, namely the presentation of report after report, interspersed with comment and speculation, in a manner apparently calculated to bludgeon the reader into acceptance of the interplanetary theory of UFOs.

His style is another source of irritation to the serious reader. The book abounds with "purple passages," such as: "This is the most common, sight-searing Thing that cavorts across our night skies in a fiery ball or ovular disc, crazily cleaving through the blue daytime skies and fleecy clouds in the guise of a silver phantom; shimmering, spinning, and always silent in flight."

Too much space is devoted to various "theories" of UFO propulsion and the author gives the impression that he expects us to believe that practically every unusual incident which occurs in Warminster is something to do with the "Thing." One incident in particular illustrates his skill in transforming natural phenomena into manifestations of the "Thing." This is the story of the adventure of three young children (pages 73-75). If the incident really happened as described it is a very good description of an encounter with a whirlwind and is thus of more interest to meteorologists than to ufologists.

At the end of the book Mr Shuttlewood gives an account of his famous telephone calls from the "Aenstrians." The messages show the typical contactee features. They consist mainly of moralising, directed at humanity in general. There is the usual, vague pseudo-science. Another typical feature is the author's claim to have received information which he must not disclose.

Although this book lacks objectivity it must be regarded as required reading for British ufologists, in view of the amount of attention which is continually devoted to Warminster.

The Scoriton Mystery by Eileen Buckle. Neville Spearman 30/-

Anyone setting out to investigate a contact claim should read this book first, then he will obtain some idea of what he may be letting himself in for!

BUFORA Committee members Norman Oliver and Eileen Buckle were intrigued to learn of the claim of Arthur Bryant (who died recently), of Scorriton, Devon, to have encountered a flying saucer and its three occupants and they decided to conduct a thorough investigation.

The results of their labours are set out in minute detail in this book. They have neglected no clue and scorned no method - scientific or otherwise - that might possibly shed further light on the mystery. Object reading, amateur psychology and the following of hunches and messages in doggerel verse which mysteriously appear on Norman Oliver's tape recorder lead the investigators into ever more bizarre adventures, at least, subjectively. As the plot thickens and more and more people get in on the act, Miss Buckle parades before the reader a delightful collection of amiable eccentrics.

The apparent preference shown in this book for occult, rather than psychological explanations of the various strange experiences described will no doubt irritate scientifically-minded readers. However, I feel that anyone who takes the trouble to read it carefully and critically will derive much interest from it.

UFOs for the Millions by Howard V. Chambers Sherbourne Press, Inc., Los Angeles, California. 1.95 dollars

As its title implies, this book serves as a popular introduction to the subject. Much of the material will therefore be familiar to our readers, but it is very readable.

Very fair accounts are given of opposing views on the subject and most aspects of the mystery are covered.

The Flying Saucer Menace text by Brad Steiger. Pictures edited by August C. Roberts. Award Books, New York and Tandem Books, London. 3/6

This is a 64-page booklet, attractively printed in magazine format, and containing 90 photographs. It is thus very good value for 3/6. Eleven chapters review every aspect of the subject, with plenty of sighting reports. The "hostility" theory is emphasised - no doubt in order to enhance the book's appeal to sensation-seekers.

Flying Saucer Hoax Makes Front Page News

An elaborate hoax, perpetrated by apprentices from the Royal Aircraft Establishment, at Farnborough, made headlines in the press on September 5th.

The apprentices constructed glass-fibre "saucers", filled them with noxious-smelling substances, equipped them with Buzzing and bleeping devices and distributed them right across England (about six of them) along the 51°30' N parallel of latitude, from Clevedon in the west to the Isle of Sheppey in the east.

MUFORA NORTHERN CONFERENCE --- The Conference will take place on Saturday, November 4th, 1967, at the Central Hall, Renshaw Street, Liverpool, 1.

Conference Co-ordinator:- R.D. Hughes, 86 Trouville Road, Liverpool, 4.

MERSEYSIDE UFO RESEARCH GROUP - Next Meeting will be on September 13th, at 8.0 p.m., at 2 Alfred Place (off Park Road), Dingle, Liverpool, 8.

M U F O R G B u l l e t i n

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CONTRIBUTIONS Articles, reviews, comments, press cuttings welcome. When writing letters to the editor, please indicate if they are intended for publication. Contributions published in this Bulletin are the responsibility of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of MUFORG. Any publication may freely reprint any original material contained in this Bulletin, unless otherwise stated, provided that a credit is given to MUFORG Bulletin.

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